Information Commissioner's Office

Environmental Policy

and

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016
Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem Plan

Information Commissioner's Office

Policy Statement and Goals

At the ICO we understand that the undertaking of our work as an effective regulator and employer requires the use of natural resources, energy and a wide variety of supplies and services.

The ICO is committed to minimising damaging environmental impacts which may arise from the conduct of our activity. The ICO has no land management function or responsibilities at any of its office.

We will explore and implement ways of working which help us to operate in a way that enhances environmental sustainability, minimises harm to our eco-system and continually improves our environmental performance.

We will use our position as a prominent organisation and significant purchaser of goods and services to encourage stakeholders and suppliers to adopt environmentally responsible practices.

We have a duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to produce and update at least every three years a Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem Plan. This Section 6 plan details the ICO's approach and gives examples of the action taken to help biodiversity.

Our environmental objectives

To help us to achieve these goals, we commit to:

- minimising the amount of energy and water we use;
- minimising the amount of CO2 resulting from our activity and offsetting CO2 emissions where possible;
- maximising the proportion of the energy we use from renewable and environmentally responsible energy sources;
- minimising the use of single use products, plastics and harmful chemicals where feasible;
- encouraging and facilitating the recycling waste;
- link with and support local initiatives on environmental issues;
- minimising or eliminating the amount of waste we produce that goes to landfill; and
- raising awareness and influencing our staff to understand how they can improve the environment through their behaviour both in work and at home.

To help us gauge how effective we have been we will monitor our use of energy and the resulting production of CO2 and publish data in our annual report.

By undertaking actions to achieve these objectives we believe we can make a difference to the ecology of the world around us, and demonstrate that the ICO is a good corporate citizen.

Our Actions

Green Group

The ICO will have a 'Green Group' made up of staff to advise, steer and support the organisation to achieve its environmental goals and develop new initiatives.

Minimising water and energy usage

As our staff numbers and building occupancy grows, it will be challenging to reduce the gross amount of water and energy we use. We can, more realistically, work to minimise the amount of these utilities we use on a per employee basis. To achieve this we will:

- Use energy efficient lighting with sensors which turn off lighting automatically when not needed.
- Take into account energy efficiency when purchasing business infrastructure equipment such as IT and servers, vending machines and other electrical equipment.
- Seek opportunities for greater energy efficiency in our buildings.
- Raise awareness and encourage our staff to operate in an energy efficient way, such as switching off equipment when not in use.

CO2 minimisation and offsetting

The production of CO2 is a consequence which is difficult to avoid for any organisation. We will work to minimise the amount of CO2 arising from what we do and seek to offset that which is unavoidable. We will do this by:

- Seeking to purchase energy using green tariffs where feasible.
- Influencing landlords in buildings where we do not control the energy supply to consider and implement green energy tariffs.
- Exploring Carbon Dioxide offsetting schemes, and contributing to programmes which offset the emissions we produce.
- Using technology to minimise the amount of business travel we undertake.

- Encouraging cycling to work and the use of public transport, as well as facilitating the ability for staff to work at home.
- Seeking information about environmental performance of suppliers when procuring for goods and services, and including this in our decision making process.

Waste management and recycling

The most effective way of managing waste is not to produce it in the first place. So we will work with our suppliers to minimise the amount of packaging which is used for inward deliveries.

The production of some waste is inevitable in an organisation of our size, and so we will work hard to minimise its negative impact by:

- Contracting with waste management suppliers who recycle as much of our waste products as possible and utilise remaining waste in a responsible way. Our aim is to send no waste to landfill.
- Ensuring our paper shredding services are provided by suppliers who recycle the shredded paper.
- Purchasing recyclable products where feasible eg paper cups.

Minimising the use of single use products, plastics and harmful chemicals

We will be mindful of the environmental consequences of the purchases we make and the processes we implement. To do this we will:

- Eliminate the use of disposable plastic cups, and supply staff with re-useable water bottles.
- Encourage the use of mugs and cups for vending machine drinks as an alternative to use of paper cups.
- Replace plastic cutlery for events sustainable wooden alternatives.
- Minimise the use of plastic bin liners in our offices.
- Require cleaning contractors to use environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Raising awareness and influencing behaviour

The actions of our staff will make a considerable contribution to our success in implementing this policy. We want to take the opportunity to educate and inform our people. We will therefore:

- Provide staff with information about how they can reduce energy usage in the office and at home.
- Maintain benefits like our cycle to work scheme and public transport season ticket loan initiative.

- Encourage the use of car sharing and facilitate its operation.
- Seek to implement incentives for staff to act in environmentally responsible ways.
- As a major employer in Wilmslow, link with and support local initiatives on environmental issues, and explore opportunities to do likewise in our regional office bases.

Document history

Author	Status	Change	Date
Michael Collins	V0.2 Draft	Created as ICO Environmental Policy which was reviewed by Green group	13/09/19
Dave Wells	V0.3	Addition of title sheet and widened scope to include Section 6 plan	15/11/19
Dave Wells	V1.0	V0.2 was approved by Senior Leadership Team on 25/11/10 V0.3 Was approved by Director of Resources 4/12/19	6/12/19